



Travis County Medical Examiner

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“ABCs of Safe Sleep” billboards urge safe sleep for babies

The Travis County Medical Examiner and the Safe Kids Austin Coalition Safe Sleep Task Force are partnering with Reagan National Advertising to display billboard posters in Travis County that urge the public to provide safe sleeping environments for babies. The billboards went up this week.

“During the past three years in Travis County, 38 babies have died in their sleep due to unsafe sleeping conditions,” said Travis County Medical Examiner Dr. David Dolinak. “These deaths are preventable with just a few simple actions, and we hope these new billboards will help teach the ABCs of Safe Sleep and prevent infant deaths.”

The three billboards, two in English and one in Spanish, remind parents and caregivers to make sure babies are sleeping alone, on their backs and in a safety approved crib. Keeping a baby safe is as easy as ABC. Make sure the baby is sleeping:

- **Alone**—not bed sharing with anyone or anything. (Room sharing is safe, but bed sharing is not.)
- On his or her **Back**—Not on his or her side or tummy. (This applies to every sleep occasion, including nap time and night time.)
- In a safety approved **Crib**—with a tight fitting mattress covered with a fitted sheet and all bedding materials removed.

While babies’ crib and bed decorations and linens are cute, they are not safe. A baby should not sleep with bumper pads, blankets, quilts, stuffed toys or any other soft objects that can cause suffocation. Babies should never share a bed with anyone. Parents and caregivers should place babies alone in their cribs, not on an adult bed, a couch or with a pillow or in any other unsuitable place of sleep. The results of inappropriate sleeping conditions for babies are too often tragic.

For more information, please call Leanne Courtney at the Travis County Medical Examiner’s Office 512-854-4425, and visit:

http://www.co.travis.tx.us/medical_examiner/safeliving/safe_sleep.asp

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Submitted by: Travis County Emergency Services PIO Lisa Block